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Regional Network for Small Hydropower (RN-SHP)

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
First Meeting

Hangzhou, China, 11 - 13 December 1984

Decentralization of RN-SHP Activities*

(Agenda item 5(c))

prepared by

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Purpose

It has been suggested that some RN-SHP Activities could be "sub-contracted" out under HRC's overall guidance to member SHP Focal Points for implementation to strengthen the "Regional" sense of the RN-SHP and also to avoid over-concentration at HRC. This report discusses this concept and puts forward some suggestions for discussion.

Background

HRC has been established for 3 years now and serves both as a national institution as well as a Regional Centre for SHP activities. In this period, the Centre has not only built up its capabilities as the Interim Secretariat but has achieved positive results in establishing the Regional Network, with 10 Focal Points already nominated. These 10 countries represent most of the Asia-Pacific region where active SHP programme exist.

Since a network has now been formed, then, following the spirit of the recommendation of the first REDP Steering Committee (Bangkok, May 1983) that "the RN-SHP was not to be viewed as an institution but as representing a co-operative arrangement for carrying out specific activities", it may now be an appropriate time to consider decentralization of the implementation of some RN-SHP activities. In this way, it will be possible to make some headway in achieving the objective given in the REDP Phase II project document that "This activity (i.e. funding for RN-SHP) should result in voluntary working of co-operative arrangements among members of RN-SHP".

Present situation

So far, all Secretariat functions have been carried out by HRC, with the help of UNIDO, UNDP and ESCAP/REDP when necessary. Despite limited staff numbers and incomplete office buildings, HRC has managed to carry out its duties within the given time and budget constraints. With the completion of Phase II buildings in about 1½ years' time, HRC's facilities and capabilities will be greatly improved.

Nevertheless, in order to achieve more involvement and active participation of all RN-SHP members, it has been suggested that some activities could be "sub-contracted" out under HRC's overall guidance to one or more member SHP Focal Points to implement with appropriate allocation of funds. These activities could include not only those listed in Report B, "Forecast of RN-SHP Activities 1984-1986", but also other projects considered of importance for the Region and for which little cash funding would be required.

Some suggested activities for decentralized implementation (for discussion)

- 1) --- one Training/Workshop: previous Workshops have been held in Hangzhou, China. A future workshop could be hosted and organized by another RN-SHP Focal Point outside China, with assistance from HRC as required, such as for preparation of teaching materials or selection of lecturers;
- 2) --- revolving training courses: just as the countries to be chosen will be on a revolving basis, so the main organizing Focal Point could also be on a revolving basis. This should also encourage involvement of a wider spread of lecturers;
- 3) --- Co-operative R+D projects: where a country is particularly strong or has a strong interest in an area chosen for an R+D project, then it is reasonable for that country's RN-SHP Focal Point to undertake the project management, rather than HRC. The project need not strictly be an R+D project, but could be, for example, the production of a design manual on SHP stations, or one aspect

of SHP technology. Such projects would not require large amounts of cash funding since they would rely on voluntary contributions of staff time for writing particular sections of the manual; yet they would be of immense value in stimulating SHP construction in the region and elsewhere. One topic suggested has been a design manual of typical designs for low-cost simplified SHP civil construction work.

Follow-up action

We hope that participants in the TAG meeting will give their full consideration to the above proposals and make a realistic assessment of what specific activities their own country could organize or be responsible for. These are only tentative proposals, and constructive criticism or suggestions are welcome.